

Sustainability Committee
Minutes of Meeting
January 18, 2012

Present: Lynn Stoddard (chair), Kristen Schwab, Rich Miller, Paul Shapiro, Holly Matthews, Bill Lennon, Vera Ward, Jennifer Kaufman (staff), Lon Hultgren (staff), Linda Painter (staff), Virginia Walton (staff)

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 by chair Stoddard.

Introductions were made to welcome the newest committee member, Kristen Schwab.

The December 8, 2011 minutes were approved as amended.

The committee reviewed the draft 2012 progress report to the Town Council. Walton will edit the report as recommended and forward to members for final approval. The target date for presenting the report to the Town Council is Monday, February 27, 2012.

The committee discussed its goals and areas of focus for 2012. Shapiro stated that it would be helpful for the Town Council to hear from citizens in support of the Mansfield Hollow Hydro project. As the project progresses, the committee might also showcase the Shifrins' efforts. Matthews reported that maintenance tours of the schools are beginning at Goodwin School on January 19, Middle School on January 26, Vinton School on February 2 and Southeast School on February 9, 2012. The tours begin at 7 pm and last a half hour. Walton will follow-up with Director of Maintenance, Bill Hammon, about his review of the carbon calculator data.

Members discussed strategies that make sustainability a factor in the decision-making process by municipal departments and committees. Suggestions included creating a handbook for staff, developing a set of queries, adopting a Town policy, using prompts to alter behavior, holding a poster contest at the schools, having a YouTube contest at EO Smith High School. Stoddard will send prompts from DEEP. Matthews will suggest the idea of a contest at the next Board of Education meeting. Walton will discuss the YouTube idea with Sherman. The committee referred the development of these ideas to the Energy Education Team.

Walton reported on the January 7 & 8, 2012 transition town training. Forming a Storrs/Mansfield Center group is the next step in the process.

Miller reported that he is working with a group to plan a week long program (March 26 - 29, 2012) at UConn focused on Climate Impact, Mitigation and Adaptation, with an evening program open to the public on Tuesday, March 27 from 7 to 9 pm. The Sustainability Committee has been asked to contribute ideas to the format of the March 27, 2012 program. Author, Mark Herzgaard, will be the keynote speaker. Members discussed having an open house prior to 7 pm with poster displays from the sustainability committee, transition towns, Storrs Center, the extension service and energy education team. There was some brief discussion about the committee making a short presentation.

Hultgren will look into a Storrs Center display. Program development will be included on the agenda of the February meeting. Walton was asked to attend the next planning meeting on Tuesday, January 24 at 4 pm, Room 137 in the Monteith building on campus.

Painter reported on two upcoming events:

- A public screening of “The City Dark,” a film about light pollution, on February 3, 2012 at 7 pm in EO Smith High School. This event is sponsored by the Mansfield Conservation Commission.
- A presentation to the Planning and Zoning Commission Regulatory Review Committee on Low-Impact Development by Michael Dietz, Director of the Connecticut Non-Point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) program, on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 at 1:15 pm, Town Hall Conference Room C.

Painter stated that the HUD grant start date is Feb 1, 2012. The first goal is to identify where barriers exist in the zoning and subdivision regulations that prevent sustainable development. As a tool to carry out the evaluation, the EPA has developed a generic questionnaire which will be used once it is adapted to Mansfield’s circumstances. The committee was asked to help review the questionnaire. Painter and Kaufman will streamline the questionnaire and facilitate dialogue at future meetings in order to get everyone’s input. Once the questionnaire is finalized, town staff, including the Building Official and Public Works Director, will complete the assessment as the next step in the process.

The meeting adjourned at 6:36 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Walton